

September 28, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) announced today that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has authorized checks for up to \$3,000 to be sent to veterans who are enrolled in a college or university through the Post-9/11 GI Bill and have not received their benefits to date because of a backlog in the VA's enrollment system.

"I am glad that the VA has acted swiftly to alleviate the burden on some of our veterans currently enrolled in colleges and universities throughout Upstate New York and across the country," **Arcuri said**, "It is critical that we give our veterans every opportunity they need to succeed here at home and this bridge funding will be critical in allowing our veterans to prosper in their education and life goals."

Starting Friday, Oct. 2, 2009, students can go to one of VA's 57 regional benefit offices with a photo ID and a course schedule to request advance payment of their education benefits. Because not all these offices are located near students, VA expects to send representatives to schools with large Veteran-student bodies and work with Veteran Service Organizations to help students with transportation needs.

A list of those VA regional offices is available at www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/offices.asp.

More than 27,500 students have already received benefits for housing or books under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, or their schools received their tuition payments. These emergency checks are going to veterans who have not yet received their education benefits and are actively enrolled in a college or university. The VA has been working to get every enrolled veteran their benefits and is using these emergency checks to bridge the gap between the start of the school year and their enrollment into the education benefits program.

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